

The Effects of City-County Consolidation of Local Government Services: A Survey of Academic Experts

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Indiana General Assembly

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Executive Summary

The Marion County Consolidation Study Commission asked the Indiana Policy Review Foundation (www.inpolicy.org) to review expert opinion on the efficacy of consolidating public services under a city-county system, with specific attention to the experience of Indianapolis and UNIGOV. This report represents the second part of that review, presenting the results of a national survey of 76 experts on the potential benefits and costs of consolidating public services. Twenty eight (36.8%) responded to the survey over a two week period.

Functional Consolidation of Public Services

The first set of questions asked academic experts on consolidation whether they believed consolidating nine specific public services (i.e., law enforcement, fire protection, social services, etc.) would increase the responsiveness of these services to the public, increase the effectiveness of providing each service, create technical efficiencies (or cost savings), or reduce service duplication. The survey results indicated:

- ✓ Academic opinion lacked consensus or general agreement on whether city-county consolidation would increase responsiveness. This disagreement was particularly split for law enforcement;
- ✓ Experts appeared to agree that consolidating all nine services identified in the survey would increase effectiveness. The largest effects would most likely be seen in economic development, planning, and fire protection. Expert opinion was less certain about law enforcement, social services, and utilities.
- ✓ Experts were significant split on whether consolidation of any of these services would result in increased efficiencies.
- ✓ A consensus seemed to suggest that consolidating economic development and law enforcement would reduce duplication of services. Experts were less certain about the benefits for parks and recreation, fire protection, public works, utilities, social services, and public health.

Academic experts were near consensus (70% or higher) that the city-county consolidation generally would:

- ✓ Improve the technical efficiency of services provide;
- ✓ Improve economic development;
- ✓ Reduce urban-suburban inequalities;
- ✓ Encourage uniform service provision;
- ✓ *Not* reduce taxes; and
- ✓ *Not* reduce public employee satisfaction;

Effects of UNIGOV and Further Consolidation in Indianapolis

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Eleven experts indicated they had specific knowledge about UNIGOV and consolidation efforts in Indianapolis. Universal or near universal agreement existed among these experts that UNIGOV has:

- ✓ Led to improved economic development;
- ✓ Led to uniform service provision;
- ✓ Lowered transaction costs for the business community;
- ✓ Not reduced public employee satisfaction.

A consensus among these experts also appears to exist that UNIGOV has

- ✓ Improved the efficiency of public service provision;
- ✓ Reduced inequalities between the city and suburbs;
- ✓ Increased accountability with local officials; and
- ✓ Not reduced the overall tax burden.

Experts were split over whether UNIGOV resulted in significant cost savings. Just 54.6% indicated they believed that economies of scale from consolidation reduced costs. In addition, a significant minority, 45.5%, believed that consolidation increased the transaction costs of working with the city for residents.

When asked about consolidating law enforcement, fire protection, and tax assessment, academic researchers familiar with UNIGOV believed that these services would become more efficient, more accountable, provide services more evenly, and reduce duplication. But, in one-on-one interviews, several voiced concerns that costs would increase significantly as lower-paid county and small town personnel were merged into the larger departments and salaries adjusted upward.

Many experts believed that “regional government models are better equipped to handle the kinds of problems our metropolitan areas face.” Yet, based on the responses to this survey, these benefits have not emerged at sufficient levels to generate a consensus among experts on the benefits of consolidating services functionally or as part of a general reform effort.

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1. Introduction

The Indiana General Assembly is currently considering legislation to allow the further consolidation of public services in the city of Indianapolis with Marion County under UNIGOV. As part of that process, the Marion County Study Commission asked the Indiana Policy Review Foundation to undertake a review of expert opinion on the efficacy of consolidating public services under a city-county system. The project was approved on August 31, 2005, with work on the project beginning in mid-September and completion of the project (and presentation of the results) set for mid-November, 2005.

The review includes two parts: a survey of the recent academic literature on the effects of city-county consolidation on the provision of public services, and a survey of expert opinion on the efficacy of city-county consolidation on public service provision. Both aspects of the project capture the knowledge, expertise, and opinion of researchers to help inform the deliberations of the study commission. Moreover the reports identify perspectives and research that directly addresses legislative concerns about the proposed further consolidation of public services in Indianapolis and Marion County.

This report presents the results and an analysis of the second part: the survey of expert public opinion.

2. Survey Design and Respondents

The survey was developed by the Research Team and pre-tested among academics prior to its distribution. The team also solicited feedback from members of the Marion County Consolidation Study Commission of the Indiana General Assembly. The team determined that the most efficient and effective way to administer the survey, particularly given the time constraints of the project, was using an on-line survey (SurveyMonkey.com).¹

Eighty-one experts were identified based on articles published in the research or academic literature on local government consolidation. The team was unable to identify reliable contact information for five, leaving a sample of 76. The survey was conducted

¹ This allowed questions to be easily edited and fine tune based on immediate feedback from the research team and others. Moreover, given the targeted focus on the survey—academics with access to and facility with the Internet and worldwide web—the team believed an on-line survey would maximize our response rate.

during the first two weeks of October, and the survey was closed on October 15, 2005. Twenty-eight experts responded (a response rate of 36.8%).²

Eleven (39.3% of the sample) indicated they had “direct knowledge” or their research has specifically included “the effects or effectiveness of UNIGOV and/or consolidated local government in Indianapolis.” These researchers were then queried and six were interviewed separately through in-depth, one-on-one interviews.³ The results of these interviews have been integrated into the discussion specifically addressing Indianapolis and UNIGOV (See section 4).

A. Characteristics of Respondents

The respondents were overwhelming male (85%) and Caucasian (95%). About half had worked in local government and half were currently employed in political science departments. Another 27% were employed in public administration or public policy departments at universities while just 19% worked in economics or business departments.

The majority of the respondents also classified their political beliefs as either liberal or progressive, while 40.7% of the remaining experts considered themselves moderates.⁴ Only two (7.4%) described themselves as conservative or libertarian. Most, however, were not politically active in local government consolidation campaigns. Just six (22.2%) reported participating in a pro-consolidation campaign and only one (3.7%) had participated in an anti-consolidation campaign.

The survey respondents also tended to be active in research. Seventy percent had written academic articles on city-county consolidation since 2000. Nevertheless, the vast majority (77%) reported they were rarely or never contacted by the media to comment on local government consolidation. Only two (7.4%) reported they were contacted by the media five times or more each year, while 14.8% said they were contacted two to four times per year.

B. Design and Interpretation of the Results

We identified nine public service areas based on the academic research although the current Marion County consolidation effort focuses primarily on law enforcement, fire services, local welfare services (social services), and tax assessment.

The prior consolidation of Marion County and the city of Indianapolis in 1974 created UNIGOV, and consolidated parks and recreation, economic development, public utilities,

² Non-responding experts were contacted at least three times, either by personal or general email, prior to closing of the survey.

³ Each of the experts was contacted, but interviews could be arranged for six under the time constraints and deadlines for this project.

⁴ This distribution is not out of line with academic researchers in this field more broadly.

public works, and most land use planning. Even though these services were not the focus of the current consolidation effort, the research team determined that including these functions allowed for a more complete survey and more robust interpretation of the findings. These other services—parks and recreation, planning, economic development, utilities, public works, social services, and public health—have been studied extensively in the literature on consolidation. Thus, including them allowed the research team to identify consistencies and inconsistencies, if any, among survey responses. Expert opinion on other services provides a useful benchmark for assessing the relative strength and consensus of expert opinion on the services under study in Marion County. Tax assessment was excluded because this has not been a focus of academic research to date, and the team believed the survey respondents would not have sufficient information to provide a general response.

To facilitate the interpretation of the survey results, we have separated law enforcement, fire protection, and social services in the tables and/or highlighted in **bold** questions specific to the services and concerns of the Indiana General Assembly.

An important goal of the survey was to determine the degree to which experts had reached general agreement or a consensus about the effects of city-county consolidation on specific government functions. Average responses that are close to 50% represent split opinion—evenly divided about the effects on services. Thus, the more significant the majority, the closer respondents are to a consensus. We interpret majorities of 70% or more as an indication of significant agreement among the experts we surveyed, while responses closer to 50% represent substantial disagreement.

3. Effects of Functional Consolidation of Services

The first set of questions asked experts whether, based on their knowledge of the academic research to date, whether they believed consolidating specific city-county services would⁵

- Increase (decrease or have no effect on) the responsiveness to citizens;
- Increase the effectiveness of service delivery;
- Increase the efficiencies from service duplication (generating savings); or
- Increase service duplication,

Our first set of questions asked experts whether they believed the city-county consolidation of public services would increase, decrease, or have no effect on the responsiveness to citizens. *Academics appear to lack a consensus or general agreement on whether city-county consolidation would increase their responsiveness to citizens and users.* Significant majorities believed that responsiveness would increase for economic

⁵ Respondents could answer “increase”, “decrease,” or “no effect”. We have reported the results for responses indicating consolidation would “increase”.

development and planning (already consolidated under UNIGOV). Opinion was largely split on other public services. Fire protection received the most support (57%), but 21% believed that responsiveness might fall and 21% believed consolidation would likely have no effect on responsiveness. Experts were split on whether consolidation would increase (39%) or decrease (39%) or have no effect (21%) on responsiveness for law enforcement.

Table 1: Expert Opinions on the Effects of Functionally Consolidating Selected Public Services				
	Increase Responsive- ness	Increase Effective- ness	Increase Efficiencies	Reduce Service Duplication
Law Enforcement	39%	61%	50%	75%
Fire Protection	57%	75%	57%	50%
Social Services	41%	56%	41%	46%
Parks & Recreation	52%	59%	56%	54%
Planning	70%	85%	65%	67%
Economic Development	71%	86%	63%	79%
Utilities	50%	61%	52%	48%
Public Works	46%	68%	59%	50%
Public Health	48%	69%	44%	46%

When asked about *effectiveness*—whether improved outcomes would be achieved through consolidation—experts believed that nine service areas would benefit from functional consolidation. Expert opinion generally agreed that functionally consolidating economic development (86%), planning (85%), and fire protection (75%) would lead to improved effectiveness. Researchers were less certain about law enforcement—61% believed that it would lead to increased effectiveness. Twenty-one percent indicated they believed law enforcement’s effectiveness would be reduced (higher than every other service except social services at 26%), and 18% believed consolidation would have no effect.

Expert opinion was split on the ability of consolidation to increase the *efficiency* of public service provision through reduced public service duplication. Economic development, planning and public works were most likely to experience efficiencies according to respondents, but about 30% believed consolidation would have no effect. Only 41% believed social services benefit from consolidation, while half believed law enforcement and fire protection would result in efficiencies.

A near consensus of academics, on the other hand, believed that functional city-consolidation of economic development (79%) and law enforcement (75%) would reduce

public service duplication. Opinion was significantly split on whether reducing service duplication would benefit parks and recreation (54%), fire protection (50%), public works (50%), and utilities (48%). In the area of social services (54%) and public health (54%), academics appear to believe that functional consolidation would have “no effect” on service duplication.

4. Attitudes on Structural Consolidation

The survey also asked academics about their views of “structural consolidation”, or consolidating government services across the board as a general reform. These questions essentially asked whether local government would be more or less efficient, responsive, effective, etc. if the region were governed by one government rather than many.

Academic experts were near consensus on their belief that consolidating local government would (Table 2):

- Improve the technical efficiency of services delivered;
- Improve economic development for the region;
- Reduce urban-suburban inequalities;
- Encourage uniform service provision;
- Not reduce taxes;
- Not reduce public employee satisfaction;

A consensus also exists among the experts surveyed that fragmented local government is an inefficient way to organize local governments.

Much less agreement exists among experts on whether consolidating local governments would increase or reduce accountability. Only 21.4% academics “strongly” agreed that consolidating governments would increase the accountability of elected officials although 35.7% “agreed” that consolidation would lead to an increase in accountability. A little less than half disagreed (32.1%) or strongly disagreed (10.7%), indicating that they believed consolidation might well reduce accountability of elected officials.

Academics were evenly split (35.7% agreed and 35.7% disagreed) on whether consolidating governments increased or decreased citizen participation and involvement. They also generally disagreed on whether consolidating governments led to a decrease in the diversity of elected officials. Half believed it would increase diversity while half said it would reduce it.

Table 2: Responses to Survey Questions on Structural Consolidation			
	Total “Agree”	Strongly Agree	Agree
Consolidating government services <i>improves the technical efficiency</i> of service delivery	81.5%	29.6%	51.9%
Consolidating governments <i>leads to improved</i> economic development	80.8%	30.8%	50.0%
Consolidating governments <i>reduces inequalities</i> between city and suburban residents	80.0%	32.0%	48.0%
Consolidating governments <i>encourages uniform service provision</i>	77.7%	33.3%	44.4%
Consolidating governments <i>limits citizens’ choices</i>	62.9%	22.2%	40.7%
Consolidating governments <i>increases the accountability</i> of elected officials	57.1%	21.4%	35.7%
Consolidating governments <i>decreases citizen participation</i> and involvement	53.6%	17.9%	35.7%
Consolidating governments leads to a <i>decrease in the diversity</i> of elected officials	50.0%	23.1%	26.9%
Consolidating governments <i>decreases responsiveness</i> to citizens	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%
Consolidating governments <i>reduces corruption</i>	42.3%	3.8%	38.5%
Consolidating governments leads to <i>higher transaction costs</i> between residents and the service bureaucracies	39.3%	14.3%	25.0%
Consolidating governments <i>decreases public employee</i> satisfaction	32.0%	8.0%	24.0%
Government fragmentation is a <i>more effective</i> way to organize local governments than consolidation	19.2%	11.5%	7.7%
Consolidating governments leads to <i>lower taxes</i>	10.7%	0.0%	10.7%

5. Impacts of Consolidation on Indianapolis

A smaller subset of the respondents (slightly under 40%) had direct knowledge of consolidation’s impact in Indianapolis. These respondents were asked specific questions about their views of the effects of consolidation on the city of Indianapolis and Marion County.

Universal or near universal agreement existed among these experts that UNIGOV has led to (Table 3):

- Improved economic development;
- Uniform service provision;
- Lowered the transaction costs of working with the city for business community;
- Did not reduce public employee satisfaction.

A consensus appears to exist that UNIGOV has:

- Improved the efficiency of service provision;
- Reduced inequalities between the city and suburbs;
- Increased accountability with local officials; and
- Do not reduce the “tax price” of the region (lower the overall tax burden).

Despite these benefits, experts are split on whether UNIGOV has resulted in significant cost savings. Just 54.6% indicate they believed that economies of scale from consolidation reduced costs. Indeed, 36.4% said they “disagreed” that consolidation resulted in cost savings through economies of scale, a portion identical to those who “agreed”. While 18.2% said they “strongly agreed” that these cost savings were achieved, 9.1% “strongly disagreed”.

Similarly, while businesses appeared to benefit from consolidated city-county government, 45.5% believed that consolidation *increased* transaction costs for residents.

The survey also asked experts familiar with UNIGOV what they believed the impact of consolidating law enforcement, fire services, and tax assessment would have on the provision of city services. A consensus appeared to exist that consolidating these services would:

- Increase the technical efficiency of providing these services;
- Increase accountability;
- Encourage the uniform provision of services, and
- Reduce service duplication.

Fire and emergency medical services seemed to be particularly likely to benefit from consolidation although in-depth, one-on-one interviews with experts revealed somewhat more caution and hesitation. One expert noted that the department would benefit from spreading the costs of acquiring capital equipment as “the combined department can spread the cost of very expensive equipment over a larger base.” Also, noting Charlotte-Mecklenburg County has a similar structure to Indianapolis-Marion County, another expert observed that insurance companies tend to “charge more for home fire insurance if the home is serviced by volunteers.” City-county consolidation, one noted, is another “step towards ‘regional’ government structures, which are increasingly the scale of problems we see in urban areas.”

Table 3: Expert Opinion on the Effects of UNIGOV and Local Government Consolidation			
	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree
UNIGOV has led to improved economic development for the region	100.0%	25.0%	75.0%
UNIGOV encourages uniform service provision	100.0%	18.2%	81.8%
UNIGOV has led to lower transaction costs between businesses and the service bureaucracies	89.0%	20.0%	69.0%
UNIGOV has improved the technical efficiency of service delivery	83.4%	16.7%	66.7%
UNIGOV has reduced the inequalities between city and suburban residents	81.8%	18.2%	63.6%
UNIGOV has increased the accountability of elected officials	75.0%	8.3%	66.7%
UNIGOV has led to a decrease in the diversity of elected officials	70.0%	0.0%	70.0%
UNIGOV has reduced corruption among public employees and elected officials	60.0%	0.0%	60.0%
UNIGOV has limited citizens choices	54.6%	18.2%	36.4%
UNIGOV has led to cost savings by achieving economies of scale	54.6%	18.2%	36.4%
UNIGOV has decreased elected officials' responsiveness to citizens	54.6%	18.2%	36.4%
UNIGOV has led to higher transaction costs between residents and the service bureaucracies	45.5%	9.1%	36.4%
UNIGOV has reduced the tax price in the region	18.2%	0.0%	18.2%
UNIGOV has decreased public employee satisfaction	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

On the other hand, other experts were cautious in interviews about the fiscal implications of consolidating fire services. “Personnel costs will increase substantially, as the lower paid township fire fighters move up to the IFD pay, and additional paid firefighters are added to replace current volunteers who will be squeezed out by ‘professional’ standards.” Another pointed to the nature of emergency services in the post-911 and post-Katrina era where services will focus more on new and more specialized services. Services will be redefined “in terms of security, hazardous waste, disaster recovery and prevention, and a variety of medical services, and so forth.” Another noted that he supported

countywide consolidation of the budget for fire protection and emergency services, with additional (staffing and equipment) resource made available to the individual 'fire' stations. Generally, public safety should be decentralized to areas.... Under a UNIGOV types system, it makes more sense to budget for staffing and building space at the township and ward level. Then maintain separate countywide budgets for investment in technology, and human or physical public capital.

Table 4: Expert Opinion on the Effects of Specific Public Service Consolidation			
Respondents saying city-county consolidation would "increase":	Law Enforcement	Fire & EMS	Tax Assessment
Effectiveness	64.0%	91.0%	67.0%
Technical Efficiency	82.0%	73.0%	78.0%
Responsiveness to Citizens	45.0%	82.0%	67.0%
Public Employee Satisfaction	27.0%	64.0%	67.0%
Accountability	73.0%	82.0%	89.0%
Corruption	0.0%	9.0%	22.0%
Uniformity of Services	91.0%	91.0%	89.0%
Service Duplication	0.0%	9.0%	11.0%
Property Taxes	73.0%	64.0%	33.0%

Experts familiar with UNIGOV appeared more split on the benefits of merging law enforcement services. On the one hand, one observed:

In this particular case, it may be a good idea. Consolidating IPD and MCSD and basing support for the combined department on a county-wide tax will remove a significant inequity for taxpayers in the current Police Services District, who now pay entirely for IPD and also for a share of the Sheriff's road patrol and detectives—who do not work within the PSD.

Another potential benefit one expert identified, citing Jacksonville-Duvall and Charlotte-Mecklenburg consolidated governments, was better “internal communication re: calls for service than the separate departments”.

On the other hand, one expert noted (echoing the concerns of least three others familiar with UNIGOV) that the “the marginal cost savings that might accrue are so small compared to the political costs. Empirical evidence demonstrates that costs will go up because the county salaries will have to be equalized with the city's and the equipment will have to be standardized.”

Most experts interviewed by the research team believed that consolidating tax assessment made sense:

Revenue collection and assessment should be a countywide function. This is in keeping with uniform assessment practices. However, each service area should have the ability to vote on rates, charges, or fees to provide services in addition to those currently mandated by the consolidated government. For example, service districts should be able to pay for increased services as an option.”

6. Conclusion

Expert opinion appears to lack consensus on a number of key elements of city-county consolidation. While most believe that consolidation will lead to a more responsive and effective system of governance, they do not believe that efficiencies will translate into lower taxes or lower government costs. The services most likely to benefit from city-county consolidation—public works, planning, economic development—were already consolidated under UNIGOV. While law enforcement may benefit from consolidation, experts appear concerned that the decentralized nature of public safety services may hamper efforts to efficiently consolidate these services.

As one expert said:

Over the years, the argument for consolidation has shifted from one based on public administration (that is, seeking efficiency and effectiveness, productivity) to one based on political science (that is, seeking accountability). Consolidated metropolitan services—generally, not in all cases—are more accountable than fragmented services. Citizens can access consolidated services without trying to figure out whether X is a county service or a city service.

Moreover, many experts believe that “regional government models are better equipped to handle the kinds of problems our metropolitan areas face.”

Yet, based on the responses to this survey, these benefits have not emerged at sufficient levels to generate a consensus among experts on the benefits of consolidating services functionally or as part of a general reform effort.

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About the Indiana Policy Review Foundation

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as preparation for their submission to academic journals and other professional publications. The authors are solely responsible for the content of their research and analysis.

Appendix:

Functional and Structural City-County Consolidation Survey of Academics

Part I: Views on Functional Consolidation

1) For each of the services listed below, based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that a functional city-county consolidation of that service would generally lead to an increase, decrease or no effect in *responsiveness* to citizens?

Service:	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Law enforcement	_____	_____	_____
Fire Protection	_____	_____	_____
Parks & Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Planning	_____	_____	_____
Economic Development	_____	_____	_____
Utilities (Sewer, Water)	_____	_____	_____
Public Works	_____	_____	_____
Social Services	_____	_____	_____
Public Health	_____	_____	_____

2) For each of the services listed below, based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that a functional city-county consolidation of that service would lead to an increase, decrease or no effect in the *effectiveness of service delivery*?

Service:	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Law enforcement	_____	_____	_____
Fire Protection	_____	_____	_____
Parks & Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Planning	_____	_____	_____
Economic Development	_____	_____	_____
Utilities (Sewer, Water)	_____	_____	_____
Public Works (including roads)	_____	_____	_____
Social Services	_____	_____	_____
Public Health	_____	_____	_____

3) For each of the services listed below, based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that a functional city-county

consolidation of that service would generally lead to an increase, decrease or no effect on efficiencies from reduced *public service duplication*?

Service:	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Law enforcement	_____	_____	_____
Fire Protection	_____	_____	_____
Parks & Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Planning	_____	_____	_____
Economic Development	_____	_____	_____
Utilities (Sewer, Water)	_____	_____	_____
Public Works	_____	_____	_____
Social Services	_____	_____	_____
Public Health	_____	_____	_____

4) For each of the services listed below, based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that a functional city-county consolidation of that service would generally lead to an increase, decrease or no effect on *service duplication*?

Service:	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Law enforcement	_____	_____	_____
Fire Protection	_____	_____	_____
Parks & Recreation	_____	_____	_____
Planning	_____	_____	_____
Economic Development	_____	_____	_____
Utilities (Sewer, Water)	_____	_____	_____
Public Works	_____	_____	_____
Social Services	_____	_____	_____
Public Health	_____	_____	_____

Part II: Views on Structural Consolidation of City and County Government.

Which of the following best describes how you feel about the statement below:

1) Consolidating governments increases the accountability of elected officials.

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Disagree
 Strongly Disagree

2) Consolidating governments decreases citizen participation and involvement.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3) Consolidating governments leads to lower taxes.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4) Consolidating governments leads to higher transaction costs between residents and the service bureaucracies.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5) Consolidating governments limits citizens' choices.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6) Consolidating governments leads to improved economic development.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7) Consolidating governmental services improves the technical efficiency of service delivery.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8) Consolidating governmental services leads to economies of scale.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9) Consolidating governments decreases responsiveness to citizens.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10) Consolidating governments decreases public employee satisfaction.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

11) Consolidating governments reduces corruption.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

12) Consolidating governments reduces inequalities between city and suburban residents.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

13) Consolidating governments leads to a decrease in the diversity of elected officials.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

14) Consolidating governments encourages uniform service provision.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

15) Governmental fragmentation is a more effective way to organize local governments than consolidation.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Part III: Indianapolis and UNIGOV

Marion County and the city of Indianapolis are considering a proposal to further consolidate city-county services. In 1973, many functions of the city and county were merged, creating UNIGOV. These functions and services included parks and recreation, economic development, public works (including roads), but did not include law enforcement, schools, and fire services. In addition, four cities and nine townships chose to remain independent. The current proposal calls for, among other programs, the city-county consolidation of law enforcement, fire and emergency services, township provided “poor relief”, and other existing townships functions into UNIGOV.

Do you have direct knowledge or has your research included the effects of effectiveness of UNIGOV and/or consolidated local government in Indianapolis? Yes No

If “no” please skip to Part VI; if “yes” please continue and complete Part IV and Part V.

Now thinking specifically about the structural consolidation of Indianapolis and Marion County, which of the following best describes how you feel about the statement below:

1) UNIGOV has increased the accountability of elected officials.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2) UNIGOV has increased the accountability of elected officials.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3) UNIGOV has reduced the tax price in the region.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4) UNIGOV has led to higher transaction costs between residents and the service bureaucracies.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5) UNIGOV has limited citizen's choices.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6) UNIGOV has lead to improved economic development for the region.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7) UNIGOV has improved the technical efficiency of service delivery.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8) UNIGOV has led to cost savings by achieving economies of scale.

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9) *UNIGOV has decreased elected officials responsiveness to citizens.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10) *UNIGOV had decreased public employee satisfaction.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

11) *UNIGOV has reduced corruption among public employees and elected officials..*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

12) *UNIGOV has reduced the inequalities between city and suburban residents.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

13) *UNIGOV has led to a decrease in the diversity of elected officials.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

14) *UNIGOV encourages uniform service provision.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

15) *UNIGOV has led to lower transaction costs between businesses and the service bureaucracies.*

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Part IV: Further Functional Consolidation in Indianapolis and UNIGOV

UNIGOV excluded law enforcement from consolidation. Based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that functionally consolidating law enforcement in UNIGOV would lead to an increase, decrease or no effect in:

Value	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Effectiveness	_____	_____	_____
Technical Efficiency	_____	_____	_____
Responsiveness to citizens	_____	_____	_____
Public Employee Satisfaction	_____	_____	_____
Accountability	_____	_____	_____
Corruption	_____	_____	_____
The uniformity of services	_____	_____	_____
Economies of Scale	_____	_____	_____
Property taxes	_____	_____	_____

UNIGOV excluded fire and emergency medical services from consolidation. Based on your understanding of the academic research to date, please check whether you believe that functionally consolidating law enforcement in UNIGOV would lead to an increase, decrease or no effect in:

Value	Increase	Decrease	No Effect
Effectiveness	_____	_____	_____
Technical Efficiency	_____	_____	_____
Responsiveness to citizens	_____	_____	_____
Public Employee Satisfaction	_____	_____	_____
Accountability	_____	_____	_____
Corruption	_____	_____	_____
The uniformity of services	_____	_____	_____
Economies of Scale	_____	_____	_____
Property taxes	_____	_____	_____

Part V: Demographics

Please circle the answer that best describes you.

- 1) Are you:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

- 2) Which of the following best describes your age:
 - a. Under 34
 - b. 35-44
 - c. 45-54
 - d. 55-64
 - e. Over 65

- 3) Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity?

- a. Hispanic
 - b. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - c. Caucasian
 - d. African American
 - e. Native American
 - f. Other
- 4) Which of the following best describes your political beliefs?
- a. Liberal
 - b. Moderate
 - c. Conservative
 - d. Libertarian
- 5) If you have your PhD, what year did you receive it?_____
- 6) Which of the following best describes the academic department you work in?
- a. Political Science
 - b. Economics
 - c. Public Administration
 - d. Business Administration
 - e. Public Policy
 - f. Other
- 7a) Have you ever worked for local government?
- a. Yes. (Go to question 7b)
 - b. No. (Skip to Question 8)
- 7b) If yes, in what capacity and for how long?
- 8a) Have you ever participated in a pro-consolidation campaign?
- a. Yes. (Go to question 8b)
 - b. No. (Skip to question 9)
- 8b) Please describe your involvement.
- 9a) Have you ever participated in an anti-consolidation campaign?
- a. Yes (Go to question 9b)
 - b. No.(Skip to question 10)
- 10) Approximately how many of the following have you published on a topic relating to consolidation?

Book Chapters_____

Articles_____

Books_____

11) In what year was your most recent professional publication on a topic related to consolidation? _____

12) How frequently are you contacted by the media on the topic of consolidation?

- a. Five or more times a year
- b. Two to four time a year
- c. Once a year
- d. Less than once a year
- e. Never

Thank you for your participation! Your comments and input are valuable to us.